

## RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

### FY 2000 WORK PLAN DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION

#### I. PROGRAM NAME AND DESCRIPTION: Division of Parks and Recreation.

To provide for the operation, maintenance and administration of a statewide system of parks, beaches, campgrounds, bicycle paths, parkways, a golf course and many smaller park properties and historical sites totaling approximately 14,000 acres. The Division operates with an annual appropriation of approximately six million dollars, generating annual revenues, which average approximately three million dollars, and serving an annual attendance figure of over six million visits. The Division utilizes a workforce, which includes seventy-four full time-year round positions as well as three hundred and ninety seasonal hourly workers. These positions represent the entire spectrum of management, supervisory, clerical, skilled and unskilled labor, security, education and public safety program personnel.

The Division of Parks and Recreation is mandated by statute 42-17.1-4 to carry out those functions of the Department relating to the operation and maintenance of parks and recreation areas and the establishment and maintenance of such additional recreation areas as may from time to time be acquired and such other functions and duties as may be from time to time be assigned by the director.

II. MISSION OF DIVISION: To provide all Rhode Island residents and visitors the opportunity to enjoy a diverse mix of well-maintained, scenic, safe and accessible facilities. To offer a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities and programming which may benefit and enhance our quality of life.

#### III. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

\* Throughout the 1990's the State has promoted the value and growth of tourism which has had a direct impact on the increased public demands placed upon operating and programming which have endured funding limitations created by continued budget reduction exercises.

\* Recognition of our "Quality of Life" value has inspired bond issues for new acquisitions and development projects which have increased the overall administrative, operational and maintenance responsibilities of the Division.

\* The elimination of restricted receipt accounts and the Recreational Area Development Fund has greatly diminished the capacity of the division to entertain dedicated fund accounts and programs such as capitol equipment and vehicle replacement, dedicated infrastructure for planned replacement programs for items such as doors, windows, roofs and paving. Accounts which facilitated donations established for items such as “carry-in/carry-out” program bags, merchandising and concert programs, etc.

\* The division has attempted to address the overall needs of the full time personnel to be classified properly in the administration of redefined duties while maintaining the FTE ceiling established. The division has created opportunities to address the needs of establishing a core of experienced supervisory positions to facilitate the influx of seasonal necessary to operate facilities. We have established a position with primary responsibility for technology and information development to facilitate our web page information, E-mail, computerized inventories and public relations endeavors such as the R.I Spring Flower and Garden Show and the Big “E”. The division has also identified a position to pursue the grant funding of various initiatives and special projects.

\* In an attempt to compete for the availability and qualifications of our seasonal workforce with other seasonal employers, the Division sought and received salary increases to address the recruitment of certified lifeguards and beach manager staffing. The division continues to struggle with existing wage scales for critical seasonal positions of Laborers, Park Rangers, Clerks and various positions throughout the system.

\*In cooperation and partnership with the Division of Enforcement we have enhanced our Park Ranger training, strengthened the enforcement of Park Rules and Regulations and assisted in the effort to transition our existing high band radio communications with enforcement initiative to upgrade for statewide communication.

\*The Division has facilitated site specific Capitol Improvement Programs funded in association with major concession and event contracts, which are of direct benefit to the facilities generating such revenues as part of contract negotiations and State Properties Committee approval.

\*The division has reestablished the Park Naturalist Program and developed a cooperative partnership with the Audubon Society to enhance public opportunity for environmental education programs within the perfect nature classrooms.

\*The Division has worked in partnership to program Learn to Swim Lessons with the American Red Cross in five State Park Facilities statewide.

\*Working in partnership with representatives from Warwick, Tiverton, Cumberland Rescue and Hasbro Children's Hospital to create an Ice Safety Committee and pursue Gen. Law 42-17.1-22 to develop Ice Safety programming for elementary schools.

\*Working in partnership with the Division of Agriculture to establish RI Farmers Market - Park Host Program.

\*Continue to work in partnership with the Division of Planning and Development on Capitol Development Programs and Projects.

\*Continue to foster supporting partnerships with such groups as the Fort Adams Trust/Foundation and the Beavertail Advisory Committee.

\*Continue to work cooperatively with various state agencies for programs of mutual benefit such as;

Governors Office - Governors Bay Day and other special events.

Governors Office of Highway Safety- Bike Safety Day Program.

Governors Office on Disabilities - access issues and programs.

RIDOT- Intermodal Transportation Facilities Program

RIPTA - Beach Bus Program, Park routes and DEM / Fort Adams-Brenton Point painted bus.

\*Continue to work with Municipalities to host special events such as;

Octoberfest / WWII State Park - Woonsocket

Summer Concerts/ City of Warwick

Summer Concerts/ City of Woonsocket

#### IV. INITIATIVES.

\* The Division must successfully develop a financially responsible capitol equipment and vehicle replacement program, which adequately addresses the critical need for dependability and utility of the necessary tools, which enable us to perform our mission.

\*Pursue seasonal salary increases for those positions, which represent the critical labor force for maintenance and operations as well as public safety and security and to insure the timely staffing of major facilities and their available programs. These increases must be competitive with prevailing wages of seasonal employers within the tourist trades in order to be effective and promote incentives for retention and return.

- \* Initiate and adopt a program of “Order Sheets” for each state facility similar to our operating requirements for municipal and private beaches inspected and determined by the division under authority of the Drowning Prevention Statute.
- \*Develop and reestablish the “Concert in the Parks” statewide events program by applying for grants and sponsorships with minimal match money to effectively leverage promotional opportunities and quality experiences. Restricted receipt or dedicated account necessary.
- \*Develop a merchandising program to be initiated within the Misquamicut State Beach Gift Shop, which will enhance revenue potential, promote the Department/Division and develop national recognition through tourist souvenirs. Merchandising has been a tremendous success nationally within the State Park Systems and has generated exceptional revenues when established programs operate within restricted receipts, which promotes purchases in direct benefit and support of the program and marketing initiatives, which enhance revenues.
- \* Pursue with the Division of Agriculture a review of pest management practices within the division with particular regard to the golf course operations for potential use of IPM alternatives and direct pollution prevention measures or practices.
- \*Institute a division wide recycling effort and program, which strengthens compliance through depository availability at all facilities and collection procedures which insure legitimate end results. Research the potential replacement and expansion of recyclable “IGLOO” containers. Develop a “Recyclable for Flowers” type of redemption program for collections which may be utilized for plantings throughout the system and provide incentive.
- \*Continue to develop and coordinate with the DOH, a beach water quality testing and information program which adequately provides for safe recreational swimming while monitoring water quality results within a timely testing protocol and dependably maximizing the availability of safe water facilities.
- \*Actively participate in watershed management forums to evaluate the environmental impact of our facility activities and maintenance/development practices as well as learning the potential impact of other activities within the watershed, which may be of benefit/concern.

<b>OBJECTIVE 1:</b> To operate, enhance, and protect a system of DEM owned outdoor recreation facilities that provide the public with a variety of recreational pursuits, and promote tourism		<b>ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS:</b>
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>
To recruit and hire adequate personnel to operate and maintain DEM-owned parks and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Redefine duties and obtain proper classification of some existing personnel to meet the demands of maintaining and operating facilities without exceeding FTE cap.</li> <li>▪ Continue to pursue wage increases for seasonal staff in an effort to effectively compete with existing job market and to attract quality personnel to seasonal positions.</li> </ul>	<p>Duties of key positions redefined and staff working in proper classifications</p> <p>New wage increases established for seasonal positions</p>
Ensure that DEM facilities are maintained in an aesthetically pleasing and environmentally sound manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perform routine maintenance and enhancements within fiscal year budget</li> <li>▪ Prevent Pollution/Conserve Resources - Work with the Division of Agriculture and Pollution Prevention staff to develop recommendation for practices and programs that reduce the use of toxic products and waste in park operations and that conserve resources.</li> <li>▪ Work with Divisions Fish and Wildlife and Water Resources and the Department of Health to ensure good beach water quality at park facilities</li> <li>▪ Participate in watershed forums to evaluate the environmental impacts of Park facilities and to learn potential impacts of other activities within watershed that may impact park facilities</li> </ul>	<p>Integrated pest management program incorporated into State park operations</p> <p>Recommendations of measures and practices to reduce pollution in park operations and to conserve resources</p> <p>Improvements in water quality at park beaches</p>

<b>OBJECTIVE 2:</b> To identify, acquire, and develop additional diverse recreational opportunities required to help meet public need or demand.		<b>ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS:</b>
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>
To partner with DOT and P & D to continue to develop and open segments of the Blackstone River Bike Path.	<p><u>Segment 6</u> – P &amp; W Railroad: Cumberland and Lincoln [3.0 miles]</p> <p><u>Segment 7</u> – P &amp; W Railroad: Lincoln, N. Smithfield and Woonsocket [3.1 miles].</p> <p><u>Segment 3&amp;4</u> – Downtown Pawtucket to Blackstone Canal Towpath [4.1 miles].</p>	<p>Construction started 1998.</p> <p>Construction to begin in 1999.</p> <p>Construction to begin in 2000.</p>
Pursue funding for the development of Snake Den State Park and warehouse and construction crew facility.	During FY 2000 obtain funding for acquisition of abutting properties for improved access from Route 6.	
Seek support and funding for possible acquisition and expansion of camping facilities at Fishermen’s Memorial State Park.	Obtain funding for acquisition and expansion	

<b>OBJECTIVE 3:</b> To provide programs and activities that promote Rhode Island parks and public safety, education and recreation opportunities.		<b>ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATOR (S)</b>
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>
Maintain programs to attract residents tourists to parks and to provide recreational opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain and enhance web site (<a href="http://www.riparks.com">www.riparks.com</a>)</li> <li>▪ Participate in special events such as the Rhode Island Spring Flower show and Big “E” fairs</li> <li>▪ Continue to work in partnership with various state agencies on programs of mutual benefit: Beach Bus with RIPTA; Governor’s Bay Day with the Governor’s Office; Bike Safety Day with the Governor’s Office on Highway Safety; etc.</li> <li>▪ Continue to work with host communities on special events in park (e.g. Woonsocket and Warwick on summer concerts, Woonsocket on Oktoberfest)</li> <li>▪ Promote special events and activities such as concerts, music or art festivals, farmers’ markets and senior days.</li> <li>▪ Promote winter recreational activities such as ice skating, ice fishing, cross-country skiing, snow mobiling, winter camping at state parks</li> </ul>	<p>Hits on web site</p> <p>Number of events held during a season and possible level of attendance.</p> <p>Number of visitors participating in winter related activities at state park facilities.</p> <p>Number of events held during a season and level of attendance.</p>

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
Enhance public opportunity for environmental education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue the recently re-established Park Naturalist Program</li> <li>▪ Continue to work in partnership with Audubon Society on environmental education programs</li> </ul>	# of education programs and attendance
Promote lifeguarding, lifeguard certification, swimming facility inspections; implement an ice safety program, and the prevention of drowning and aquatic related accidents.		Number of swimming programs offered in partnership with the American Red Cross. Number of Lifeguards certified and the number of swimming facilities inspected.
Promote public safety and rule / regulation compliance through the Park Ranger Program in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies.	Conduct trainings	Number of accidents, injuries, warnings or summons that occur. % decrease from FY99
Seek additional funding sources, sponsors and partnerships to enhance programs and activities that promote Rhode Island parks and public safety, education and recreation opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explore re-establishing “Concert in the Parks” statewide</li> <li>▪ Develop a merchandising program at Misquamicut State Beach Gift Shop to raise revenue</li> </ul>	Additional revenue, sponsors, partners and programs established